(c) Prasar Bharati has informed that an expenditure of Rs. 19.61 crores was incurred on the channel during 2003-2004.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Prasar Bharati, as a statutory autonomous corporation enjoys autonomy in programme matters. Prasar Bharati has informed that there is no such proposal to convert the DD News Channel into an entertainment channel, as before. They have further informed that this channel has met the above objective and has also been well received both by the viewers and the advertisers.

Entertainment Sector

658. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are heading for a significant change and to bring new initiatives in the entertainment sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to increase the FDI in FM and to bring it at par with the print and electronic media; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) The Government have taken several initiatives to bring about changes in the entertainment sector in the interest of the overall development of this sector;

- Institutional and bank financing are new accessible to the entertainment industry.
- 100% Foreign Direct Investment is permissible in the film sector.
- Government has led participation in global markets with a view to enhancing visibility of film industry.

- Film weeks and festivals are held on reciprocal basis with various countries.
- Audiovisual co-production agreements with other coutnries are being explored to expand avenues of finances and markets for the Indian film industry.
- The Committee for Development of the Entertainment Sector set up to suggest a policy framework for the film industry has recommended reduction of entertainment tax; steps to counter piracy in the film sector, measures to facilitate foreign film shooting in India etc.
- A Venture Capital Committee has been setup to suggest a strategy to facilitate the flow of venture capital into the sector.

(c) and (d) The Radio Broadcast Policy Committee in its Report has recommended upto 26% FDI in FM Broadcasting. The Report of the Committee has been referred to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India for recommendations.

Licenses for new channels

659. DR. T SUBBARAMIREDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of proposals are under Government's consideration for issuing license for operating new channels;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how many out of them are with foreign collaboration and how many are without any collaboration;

(d) by when a decision is likely to be taken in this regard; and

(e) the reasons for delay in granting the licenses?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) As on date, 11 new proposals are under process for permission to uplink TV channels from India, the details of which are given in the enclosed statement (See below).